

THE SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.

THIS achievement at length, by Messrs. Brett and their coadjutors, of the submarine telegraph across the British Channel, induces me to step forward to claim for myself the merit (if any be attached to it) of being the first originator of the idea of a submarine electro-magnetic telegraph,—an idea which flashed across my mind on reading the account of Professor Wheatstone's success in his first experiments on the electric wires between Paddington and Slough; and after digesting and mentally maturing a project, which had for its object the like effect by submarine agency, I submitted it for the consideration of the Lords of the Admiralty, and for which I had the honour to receive their lordships' thanks (conveyed in a letter from their secretary, dated 5th August, 1844, with an acknowledgment of the receipt of my "Suggestions on the subject of effecting a communication with distant parts of the globe by means of electricity"); "but their lordships declined entertaining the idea, as intelligible" (meaning, as I conjectured, that they deemed it totally impracticable. Indeed, such "a fanciful, absurd idea," as it was then designated, was ridiculed by many as being altogether Utopian, but I am thankful to Providence that I have lived long enough to see my "Utopian absurd project" partially carried out, and, to a certain extent, actually realised;—I say to a certain extent, for my project embraced the probability of its eventual extension to India through the Mediterranean and Isthmus of Suez, down the Red Sea, across to Bombay, and, after circumscripting the Indian Peninsula, extending the wires on to China, which I made the terminus of my "Utopian project," leaving it to a future generation to carry the wires down to Australia, and from Ceylon across to the Cape of Good Hope; trusting, however, to the possibility of the wires being ultimately taken across the Atlantic to America, though with but slight expectation that any one of them in esse would live to see this latter effected. Still, however, such an achievement was not utterly improbable. But certainly, as regarded a telegraphic communication with India, I considered that as coming within the range of rational probabilities; for although the expense of such a gigantic undertaking must of necessity be vast in the extreme, yet what is there which cannot be achieved by the united means of Government and the East India Company, both mutually and reciprocally interested in its accomplishment, and as affording, too, a return of a small per-centage on the outlay produced by an interchange of communication in a manner which I then pointed out, somewhat similar to the plan since adopted by the present Electric Telegraph Company.

D. WARREN.

THE LATE W. WYON, R.A.

ENGLAND has lost her chief medal-die engraver by the death of Mr. William Wyon, which took place on the 29th of October. Mr. Wyon, who possessed a delicate constitution, was deprived of the use of his left side by a palsy attack whilst at Brighton, from which he never rallied: he gradually sank, and expired in about a month afterwards; he had gone to the coast for the improvement of his health, which for some few years past had been impaired.

Mr. Wyon was born in 1205, at Birmingham, and was apprenticed to his father, an eminent engraver, in 1809. When he was a young boy he met with a copy of Flaxman's "Dante" at a gentleman's house. Of Flaxman he knew nothing, but he was so enraptured with his works that he begged permission to study them, which being granted, he copied many if not most of the outlines. This showed no common discernment in a boy to whom good art was quite a stranger before he met with those works. He always attributed to this his advancement in art, and called Flaxman his real instructor. He owed something to his cousin, the younger Thomas Wyon, a genius, who was chief engraver to the Mint, and died at the early age

of twenty-five. Marchant, the gem engraver, was also useful to him about this time.

In 1813, according to a sketch in the *Literary Gazette*, which we use to piece out our own knowledge of the subject of this notice, he received the gold medal of the Society of Arts for his die of the Head of Ceres, which the Society purchased and used as their Gold Agricultural Prize; and he received another gold medal from the same Society for his group of Victory in a Marine Car attended by Tritons. In 1815 he again visited London, to assist his uncle in engraving the public seals; and in the following year, he was, upon the judgment of Sir Thomas Lawrence, elected as second engraver of the Mint, being only in the twentieth year of his age. In 1821 he married the late Mrs. Wyon, whose death in 1851 (February 14th) was severely felt by him.

In 1824 Mr. Wyon entered upon the duties of chief engraver of the Mint, but did not receive his official appointment until 1826. From that time until the present, all the coinage of this country and of the colonies has been executed by him, or under his superintendence. He made also numerous designs: amongst them, a figure of Neptune, for the reverse of the ten-pound piece of the nasal sovereign, William IV., was highly approved by the Master of the Mint, though it was never executed. A figure of Ursa, as the reverse of the five-pound piece of her Majesty, the medallion crown-piece of her Majesty, and nine different patterns for the florin, were also designed.

In 1835 he was invited to Lisbon to make a medallion portrait of Queen Donna Maria, and he received a commission to engrave dies for a series of coins of her most faithful Majesty. In 1831 he was elected an associate; and, in 1835, a member of the Royal Academy; and many commissions were entrusted to him by the Royal Academy, by foreign academies, by the governments of England and of Portugal, and by the public.

Amongst his chief works may be mentioned the Brodie Medal, the Stuart Medal, the Chantry Medal (for the Art-Union of London), the medal commemorative of the Queen's visit to the City, Prince Albert's Medal, the Royal Humane Society's Medal, the Liverpool Shipwreck Society's Medal, Lloyd's Medal, and all the war medals which have been conferred for a series of years; for instance, those for India—Cabal, Jellalahad, &c.; the Sulej medals—Sobraon, Aliwal, &c.; the Punjab medals—Chillianwallah, &c.; the retrospective medals for former Indian victories—Ava, Bhurtpoor, &c. (these two last mentioned, Retrospective and Punjab, are not yet issued); the army or Peninsular medals, the navy medals, and a number of others. Nor must we omit, as amongst the most important medals he ever made, the obverses of the Exhibition medals, bearing the portraits of the Queen and Prince. Subsequently he did the exhibitors' and service medals, his last works, which are not yet issued, but were in active progress.

In earlier life the conductor of this journal, when halting in the choice of a profession, went into Mr. Wyon's studio preparatory to being articled to him, but ultimately adopted architecture as his pursuit. From that time to the present we have enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance, and bear sincere testimony to his amiability and kindness. He will be succeeded at the Mint, we may suppose, by his son, Mr. Leonard Wyon, who has well profited by his father's instruction.

IMPROVEMENT OF GREENWICH PARK.—

The committee appointed at the late vestry have met to consider the present state of the park. They determined to present a memorial to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, calling their attention to the fact that a large portion of the park had been enclosed and added to the garden of the ranger. It was also resolved to urge that an ornamental fountain should be placed in the centre of the reservoir; that the gate at the foot of Maise-hall, which has been closed many years, should be thrown open; and also that a carriage-road should be formed from Blackheath to the gate at St. Mary's Church.

ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS.

THE Bristol Society of Architects have made the following bye-laws and regulations with respect to

"TRADE COMPETITIONS—ARRANGEMENTS WITH BUILDERS, &c."

1. If an architect takes off quantities from his own plans, they shall be subject to additions and deductions in case of error: it shall not, however, be compulsory for builders to take such quantities. Any one preferring to take off his own quantities may do so without prejudice to his interests; and for this purpose a reasonable time is to be allowed.

2. If any builders require the quantities to be taken off for them, they shall have the option of naming a surveyor for that purpose, he being an associate of this society, and approved of by the architect.

3. In private competitions the names of the builders applied to shall be exhibited in the architect's office, or at the place where the plans lie for inspection. In public competitions, a paper shall be provided to register the name and address of each person competing, such paper being open to the inspection of all competitors.

4. Tenders shall be opened, where practicable, in the presence of the employer and the builders: the amounts of the tenders to be shown to the competing builders, if they so request.

5. When general tenders are applied for, no separate tenders are to be admitted, and vice versa.

6. No builder or surveyor shall be allowed, under any pretence, to make copies or tracings of the drawings, without the written consent of the architect; and any drawings which may be furnished to a builder for the execution of his work shall be considered as the copyright of the architect furnishing them, and be returned to him at the completion of the building. They must not be copied or traced for any purpose whatsoever without first obtaining the express written consent of the architect. Any violation of this condition will render the person liable to immediate expulsion from this society, and forfeit the good opinion of the fellows.

7. Works shall be measured up within three months from the time of completion of the works contracted for, unless otherwise stipulated in the specification.

8. In the event of any private local competition, none but associates of this society shall be applied to for tenders, unless by the request of the employer.

9. The names of all candidates for admission as associates shall, in the first place, be submitted to a committee of associates, for the purpose of eliciting their opinion as to the respectability of the said candidate, such opinion to be given in writing, signed by the chairman of the associates. The fellows shall not, however, be bound to adopt the recommendation or suggestion of the committee of associates, should their own opinion be contrary.

10. No fellow of this society shall undertake the execution of any work, by contract or otherwise, or in any manner interfere with the province of the builder, unless such work be intended for his own private use.

11. No associate of this society shall be allowed to prepare plans or designs for any building, but shall in all cases recommend the employment of an architect. In the event of the employer refusing to call in the assistance of an architect, the builder shall submit a sketch of the proposed erection for revision to some architect, a fellow of this society, and shall pay such sum as the council shall fix and determine, unless a special agreement be made at the time between the builder and the architect so applied to.

12. No fellow or graduate of this society shall accept, or knowingly permit any person employed by him to accept any pecuniary or other remuneration or acknowledgment from any builder or tradesman whose works he may have been employed to superintend.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF MINES.—

Mr. Henry De la Beche inaugurated the lecture seasons in the theatre of the new building in Piccadilly, on Thursday, and was listened to by a distinguished audience. Dr. Lyon Playfair, Professor E. Forbes, and the other professors, will commence their courses this week.

OPENING THE WEST FRONT OF ST. PAUL'S.—We are glad to observe that Mr. Barber is still determined to carry out our suggestion, and to that end has just given notice of a motion in council for renewing the application to the dean and chapter for the removal of the iron railing and the opening of the area into the public way.